

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LIMA 00655 252318Z

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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R 252122Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3454

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

S E C R E T LIMA 0655

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PE, CI, CU, GY

SUBJECT: REPORT THAT CUBA IS ENCOURAGING PERU TO ATTACK CHILE

REF: GEORGETOWN 0138, LIMAA-002

1. WE AGREE WITH CHARGE MCCOY THAT GUYANESE FEARS OF A CUBAN MILITARY ADVENTURE IN PERU, PARTICULARLY INVOLVING GUYANA, SEEM FAR-FETECHED. AS WE HAVE REPORTED (REFAIR), WE BELIEVE A CUBAN DECISION TO INVOLVE ITSELF DIRECTLY IN ANY PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CHILE WOULD REQUIRE A CAREFUL CUBAN ASSESSMENT OF ITS OVERALL INTERESTS, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. A RATIONAL CUBAN ASSESSMENT WOULD, WE BELIEVE, LEAD TO A DECISION NOT TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SUCH A PERUVIAN ATTACK (WHICH WE BELIEVE UNLIKELY IN ANY CASE).

2. HOWEVER, WE HAVE ALSO NOTED THAT CUBA MIGHT SEE ITS INTERESTS SERVED BY ENCOURAGING A PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CHILE THAT DID NOT INVOLVE DIRECT CUBAN ASSISTANCE. PERU/CUBAN RELATIONS HAVE BEEN COOLING FOR SOME MONTHS. THE GOP HAS BEEN ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ROOTING OUT CUBANS AND CUBAN INFLUENCE IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, THE FISHING SECTOR, THE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LIMA 00655 252318Z

PRESS, THE FISHING SECTOR, SPORTS AND AMONG THE MILITARY FORCES. CUBA MIGHT SEE ENCOURAGEMENT OF A PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CHILE, AND COVERT AID TO PERU, AS A WAY TO RECOUP ITS LOSS OF INFLUENCE IN THIS COUNTRY.

3. WE BELIEVE THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT SEE ITS INTERESTS SERVED BY AN ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN PERU AND CHILE. WE THINK

THE SOVIETS ARE PLAYING FOR THE LONGER-TERM HERE, SEEKING TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE AMONG SECOND AND MIDDLE-LEVEL MILITARY OFFICERS IN HOPES OF A SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER FOOT-HOLD IN PERU THROUGH FUTURE MILITARY GOVERNMENTS. IF THAT APPRECIATION OF SOVIET MOTIVES IS ACCURATE, IT COULD HELP EXPLAIN WHY THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO GEORGETOWN WOULD WARN THE GUYANESE AGAINST CUBAN ACTIVITIES THE SOVIETS WOULD SEE AS RISKY.

4. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THAT CUBA IS TRAINING PERUVIAN PILOTS, AND WE DOUBT THAT ANY SUCH TRAINING, IF IT EXISTS, IS LARGE SCALE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME CUBAN ADVISERS HELPED SOVIETS TO TRAIN PERUVIANS. DEAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WAR, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LIMA00655
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770027-0684
Format: TEL
From: LIMA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770121/aaaaasho.tel
Line Count: 75
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e6749ed1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 GEORGETOWN 138, 77 LIMA A-2
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3512929
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORT THAT CUBA IS ENCOURAGING PERU TO ATTACK CHILE
TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, PE, CI, CU, GY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e6749ed1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009